PATIENT SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER   **Section 97220**

The patient's social security number is to be reported as a 9-digit number. If the patient's social security number is not recorded in the patient's medical record, the social security number shall be reported as "not in medical record," by reporting the social security number as "000000001." The number to be reported is to be the patient's social security number, not the social security number of some other person, such as the mother of a newborn or the insurance beneficiary under whose account the hospital's bill is to be submitted.

DISCUSSION

Format for reporting this data element on the Manual Abstract Reporting Form for discharges occurring on or after January 1, 1999:

20. PATIENT'S SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER
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(000 00 0001 if not recorded in the medical record)

Requirement for the SSN in Hospitals: Licensing and Certification of the Department of Health Services requires that the patient's SSN, if available, be recorded as part of the content of the medical record (Section 70749, Title 22, California Code of Regulations).

The SSN was added to the California Hospital Discharge Data Set (CHDDS) as an identifier to link episodes of care over time and across providers in order to support research addressing the quality of medical care in California hospitals. A unique personal identifier can also assist policy makers and researchers (e.g., number of patients admitted for a specific condition). OSHPD continues to consider the protection of individually identifiable medical information as the crux of its legislative mandate.

The SSN is confidential and is encrypted into a nine-digit alphanumeric identifier, the Record Linkage Number (RLN). The RLN is available on public data sets because the SSN from which it is derived cannot be determined.

Non-U.S. Numbers: Even if a non-U.S. number resembles a U.S. SSN, do not report it to OSHPD.

SSN for Patient Only:

- Mother's SSN is not the newborn's SSN.
- Parent's SSN is not a child's SSN.
- Husband's SSN is not a wife's SSN.

Valid/Invalid SSNs: SSNs consist of nine digits divided into three parts. The first three digits

denote the area (or state) where the application was filed. The middle two digits denote a group number ranging from 01 to 99. The last four digits are the serial number. Because of the way the SSN is constructed, it is possible to say that a particular SSN is invalid if it starts with three digits not approved by the Social Security Administration for use as an area identifier or if it has 00 in the group number area. Please refer to the current version of OSHPD's Editing Criteria Handbook for valid/invalid area identifier numbers.

Validation: Semiannually, OSHPD verifies the area (or state) digits with the local office of the Social Security Administration.

Medicare Numbers: The Medicare program is a federal health insurance program for individuals 65 years and older and certain disabled individuals. The number issued for Medicare coverage is a Health Insurance Benefit/Claim (HIB/HIC) number. The HIB/HIC number usually has nine digits and one or two letters, and there may also be another number after the letter(s). There are no dashes or spaces in the HIB/HIC number. SSNs and HIB/HIC numbers are not interchangeable. The first nine digits of the HIB/HIC number may be, but are not always, the same as the nine digits of the SSN.